

If I could see your face again

- A Kairosis larp

Inspired by historical events
and a song by Steve Earle

Playtime: 4 hours

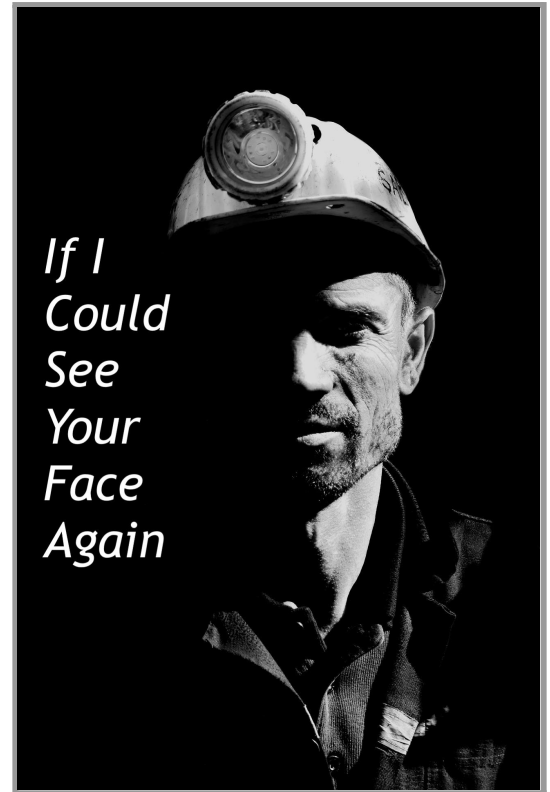
Number of players: 8-10

NPCs: 2

GMs: 1

Technical reqs:

- A screen and audio setup of some sort so that pictures can be shown and video and music can be played.
- Something to make a distinct sound with, like a bell or similar.
- 18 chairs.
- 3 tables
- 1 laptops
- An NPC room (or space) with 2 chairs and a table.
- 2 balls of yarn.
- Nametags



Resources, such as pictures, movies, texts and so on can be found here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19EeH-9r4Ng-tNpyXcE9b8Jax9Qkp1_SX?usp=sharing

Note: All text in *italic* is meant to be read to the players as it is. The rest of the text is instructions to the person(s) running the larp. That being said, please approach this in the way that feels comfortable to you. This is art, not math, so improvisation is more than welcome.

NB! There are 2 NPC characters in this larp. They will play the trapped miners, and will be removed from the main room after day 1. They will participate in the workshops as if they were regular players.

Disclaimer:

- This larp leans heavily into the ideal of a heteronormative nuclear family being the core unit of a society. This is done to keep close to the inspiration for the larp. It is not meant to be an endorsement for this particular ideal or a comment on any other way of organizing your family, relations, or love life.*
- In this larp there are characters that might have very different political and religious views than you as a player. This is a result of the larp being set where it is. We encourage you to try to explore these views with respectful curiosity. Since many of our cultural references in this regard have been created with an outside lense, often to ridicule, it might be hard to stay away from caricature, but we ask you to be*

mindful, and see if you can find some common human experiences that you might share with your character.

Intro

If I Could See Your Face Again takes place in the small West Virginian mining town of Norton's Gully. Nestled deep in traditional coal country, this tiny town is a place where everybody knows your name, and where God, country, and family stands at the centre of everything.

Together, we will tell the story of how this tiny community reacts to an accident that leaves a skeleton crew of miners caught underground, and the rescue operation that gets set in motion to save them.

The families of the trapped miners are put to the test as both the national and international press centers on their lives, and creates a spectacle of their plight and their community. Will the bonds of blood, love, and community be enough to pull them through? Or will they break and shatter under the strain?

You know there is little to no hope of rescue. What would you say if you knew it might be the last words you ever shared? How can you imagine never hearing their voice again? Never feeling their arms around you? How would you keep them alive in your mind, if you could never see their face again?

Setting up the Game Space

There are three distinct spaces that needs to be set up:

1. Kitchen table at family 1
 - a. 5 chairs around a table. If there is no table, 5 chairs can be set in a circle.
2. Kitchen table at family 2
 - a. 5 chairs around a table. If there is no table, 5 chairs can be set in a circle. Set this away from the other family's kitchen table, so as to avoid interference if possible.
3. Church / Crisis centre
 - a. 8 chairs. For the church they are in rows. When this turns into a crisis center, they can be moved around.
4. The communications room
 - a. A table with 4 chairs on one side and 2 on the other. The table is there to represent the video-conference, while the 4 chairs are at the crisis centre and the 2 chairs are the mine.

In addition we need a table for the crisis coordinator to have their laptop on and a large screen connected to that laptop.

Pre-game set up and workshops:

1. Start everything by playing the theme music. Tell the players that this music will mark the end of the larp and ask them to pay attention to the lyrics.
2. Warm up exercise of your choice. - 5 min
3. Safety workshop
 - a. Cut
 - i. *Players can say the word "Cut" at any time if they do not want the scene to continue. For emphasis they can form a T with their hands, similar to how Time-Out is called in many other contexts. They will not be asked to explain why. When "Cut" is used, all play stops immediately and it will not be resumed until the situation is resolved.*
 - b. X-card
 - i. *Players can "X-card" any content that they do not wish to play on. They do this by for instance saying: "I X-card any content related to animal cruelty": For emphasis they can form an X with their arms in front of their chest. They will not be asked to explain why. When "X-card" is used, the players will do their best to remove the mentioned content from further play.*
 1. Model this by X-Carding the following:
 - a. X-Card on Racism. There is surely systemic racism in the US, and we do not want to erase that. This is not what we are playing on in this larp though.
 - b. X-Card on Vaccines and other conspiracy theories. There is no conspiracy here.
 - c. X-Card on extreme political and religious views. Yes, the characters have strong political and religious convictions, but they are not extremists.
 - c. Softer
 - i. *Players can say the word "Slower" when they wish for the scene to continue, but with a lower intensity. This can be emphasized by putting your hand palm down, and gesturing downwards, as if you are pressing the brake pedal on a car. They will not be asked to explain why. When "Softer" is used, the players will do their best to reduce the intensity of the scene to a level that all the players are comfortable with.*
4. Family / Character workshops
 - a. Create the two family groups. Make sure to have 1 NPC in each family. The families will use their "kitchen" for the workshops.
 - b. Distribute the characters. Note that the NPCs/trapped miners do not have a character. Instruct the players of the other characters to explain to the NPC what the relationship between their characters is.
 - c. Have the players name their characters and put on their nametags. Make special note of the name of Mike Hall's (one of the trapped miners) best friend. You will need this for a scene in act 2.
 - d. The characters create their family dynamics by answering the following questions together:
 - i. What are we great at?
 - ii. What is our biggest source of lasting conflict?
 - iii. How do we spend our weekends?

- iv. Who sits where around the kitchen table?
- e. The ball of yarn-exercise:
 - i. The players sit in a circle. One of them holds the end of a thread from a ball of yarn. The player who holds the ball throws it to another person in the circle, while making a statement about the relationship between the two. Examples: "I am usually very happy when you enter the room" or "we had an argument at the fishing trip last summer, but have since been the best of friends." The player who receives the ball grabs onto the thread, while passing along the ball and defining a relationship with a different player. By watching the growing web of yarn, participants become aware of who already has plenty of relationships and who need more. The exercise ends when everyone has a sufficient number of relationships, usually two or three per player.
- 5. Intimacy workshops:

There will be characters that have deep conflicts, but love takes on many forms and shows itself in more ways than the unconditional ideal. Try to allow for space so that different emotions might mix just under the surface.

 - a. Long hugs exercise. (In Covid-times this can be replaced by eye-gazing)
 - i. The players within the family take turns hugging each other. Each hug should last at least 1 minute. Do this until all the family members have hugged each other once.
 - b. The «I love you» exercise.
 - i. Two players stand facing each other, holding hands. While gazing into each other's eyes, they take turns saying "I love you". This should last at least 1 minute. Do this until all family members have done the exercise with each other.
 - c. Playing out a vacation scene
 - i. Play a short 5 minute scene from a vacation that the family went on. The family chooses the setting and the tone themselves.
 - d. Playing out a family argument.
 - i. Play a short 5 minute scene from an argument that keeps repeating itself. The family chooses the setting themselves.
- 6. "Best Buddy" workshop
 - a. The players create one deep and meaningful relation between their character and one character in another family. This is their «best buddy». Make sure to share information that your character's best buddy would have about your character and possibly relationships within your family.
- 7. The big hug / Family Photos
 - a. Just a great big group hug with the family because they have created something together and they are all awesome.
 - b. The family lines up for a family photo.
- 8. Do a dry run of how a day plays through. Have the players physically do this. Introduce the players to «the sound», your bell or similar that makes a recognizable sound. Explain that it will be used to mark time passing in the game, not starting or stopping.

This is how every day will run:

- a. Players start at the kitchen table with eyes closed.
- b. Guided narration.
- c. Morning News
- d. Breakfast Scene
- e. Sound of time passing.
- f. Players move to the crisis centre/church
- g. Community scene
- h. Sound of time passing.
- i. Players move to the kitchen table.
- j. Evening scene.
- k. Sound of time passing.
- l. Players close their eyes.

THIS IS A GREAT TIME FOR A BREAK!

Run Time / Structure

The larp consists of 6 acts, 6 days in the lives of the characters. Each day starts and ends with the players sitting with their eyes closed and heads bowed in a circle around the family table. Time is accelerated, so the six days are not in the same week. In fact, several weeks will pass between act 1 and act 6. Every act will start with a guided narration. The narration will end with the radio news program starting. Play can begin anytime during the radio broadcast.

When play starts, we will have a short scene at the breakfast table, upon hearing the sound that marks the passage of time, the family will head to the crisis center for updates. On day 1 there is no Crisis Centre, so the family will go to church instead. The scene there will start just as the sermon ends and they mill out together. This is a great time to have a chat with your best buddy. When the scene at the church or crisis centre has played out, the sound that marks the passage of time will tell the families to head back to their homes for dinner. There will then be a scene around the dinner table.

The acts will end with the sound that marks the passage of time.

Act 1: “Well, I’ve lived here all my life...” - Day 1

1. Play the Mp3 named “Theme Song”
2. **Guided narration:**

Well, I’ve lived here all my life. You might find that strange if you were not from here. Why would anyone not want to see the world beyond these hills and mountains? But I tell you that I have seen the world, and it left me wanting. The world out there is vast... empty ... Godless even. Where would I go to find community, life, love and family like what we have here? Where can I see the seasons shift with the grace and beauty of the forests around my hometown? Where does the sunrise break like it

does over the hills back home? I was born on this mountain and this is where they will lay me down.

3. Play the Mp3 named "Day 1"
4. Scene: Kitchen table - about 5 min.
5. Play the sound marking the passage of time
6. Scene: Church.
 - a. The GM plays the priest and reads the following sermon:
Peter 1, 2:15. "For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people." ... God's will is for his people to live faithfully and to do what is right even if the response of an unbelieving world causes them to suffer...If suffering is within God's will, it is also within God's sovereign control. And thus, Christian suffering is determined not by the will of one's adversaries but by the will of one's heavenly Father.
Peace be on you and your family. God bless you, our church, our town...
And may God bless America!
7. Play the sound marking the passage of time
8. Scene: Dinner table - about 5 min.
9. Play the sound marking the passage of time
10. While the players are sitting with their eyes closed and heads bowed, have the NPCs get up and leave the circle. They will go sit in their space/room, where they will pretend to be trapped in the mine.

Act 2: "I'm all alone with darkness all around me..." - Day 2

Tone: Panic, Fear, Everything is new and scary, panic. Characters lash out at each other and the authorities.

Guided narration:

Tonight I dreamt about being trapped again. In this town. In this house. In this life. I haven't had that dream for years now, and it shook me. I felt all alone with darkness all around me, like that one time when my flashlight went out in the forest. All I could do was wait and hope that sunrise would find me before the darkness became too much. ... I woke up, a sinking feeling in my gut. Something is coming and it ain't gonna be good.

1. Play the Mp3 named "Day 2"
2. Scene: Kitchen table - about 5 min.
3. Play the sound marking the passage of time
4. Scene: Crisis Centre
 - a. The GM plays the Government crisis coordinator. The interaction will be brief. (We want the players to play together.) Give the coordinator a name, something simple like "Mr. Johnson" or similar. In this act the coordinator will be curt and efficient, but be in a hurry. Try to leave the scene as quickly as you can.
 - b. Make a point that since they are here because they are families of the missing miners and you can offer them more information than the media has gotten so far.

- c. The GM reads the following statement:
At 3:20 AM last night, the mining shaft known as Delta collapsed, blocking off a number of levels. The company's emergency procedures were immediately activated and our industrial safety and occupational health personnel have been hard at work assessing the situations since. They notified the authorities, and we are assisting in the rescue efforts, with the necessary personnel and equipment.
So far we have established that a crew of 6 miners who were working on Level 400b/2 are not accounted for. ... End of statement.
- d. The list of the missing miners: (If not asked by the players, volunteer this information just as you leave the room.)
 - Albert Hansen
 - Jeremiah Smith
 - Bob Wilson
 - Charlie Abrahams
 - Keith McCormack
 - [Insert name of Mike Hall's best friend]
- e. If there is no play on the last name of the list being wrong, come back to the room after your initial exit and say that there must have been some sort of mistake. Try to get the play around Mike and his best friend changing shifts.
5. Play the sound marking the passage of time
6. Scene: Dinner table - about 5 min.
 - a. During this scene you will prep the NPCs for the conference scene in act 3:
 - i. Tell them to wait with interacting with their families until you "connect the call".
 - ii. The miners have been trapped for a week. It is dark and cold. Their water and food is low.
7. Play the sound marking the passage of time

Act 3: "Tonight's just like the night before, ain't nobody walking through that door..." - Day 9

Tone: Normalcy. Feeling annoyed and betrayed. Frustration. "Thoughts and prayers" feel like meaningless support. Bonding over frustration.

Guided narration:

Minutes turn to hours. Hours to days. A week passes. Every night I sit in the kitchen, waiting for him. But tonight, just like the night before, ain't nobody walking through that door. Most days I fall asleep at the table or in the chair in the living room. When I wake up, someone has put a blanket over me, to keep me warm. It smells like memories, like happy days gone by. It is scary how quickly things just feel.... "normal"... A new normal without him.

1. Play the Mp3 named "Day 3"
2. Scene: Kitchen table - about 5 min.
3. Play the sound marking the passage of time
4. Scene: Crisis Centre

- a. The GM plays the Government crisis coordinator. The interaction will once again be brief.
- b. There is contact with the miners. The families will be allowed to talk with their loved one over video conference for a short amount of time. There is only room for 2 people from each family though. The families will need to quickly choose which 2.
- c. Lead the 4 characters to the communications room.
 - i. Explain that you will soon start the call. Emphasize that it will be grainy and glitchy and that they need to speak one at a time in a clear voice.
 - ii. Tap the table and say "Call is now up".
 - iii. After a little while, you can simulate a loss of contact by tapping the table and say "We seem to have lost contact..." Bring it back again after at most 10 seconds by tapping the table and saying "We are back up again..."
 - iv. The scene should not last very long and there should not be much clear communication. Tap the table and say "Screen went black. We will have to recharge the batteries now".
 - v. Lead the players back to the central room in the crisis centre and let them interact with the rest of their families. Make sure that they get to share a little, before playing the sound that marks the passage of time.
5. Play the sound marking the passage of time
6. Scene: Dinner table - about 5 min.
7. Play the sound marking the passage of time

Act 4: "And every breath is not a prayer..." - Day 15

Tone: Fear. Loss.

Guided narration:

Several more days pass. Hope is now tethered to an ancient line of copper that runs from the surface, down into the deep darkness. As if a single strand of hair held the weight of the world. A shadow on a grainy screen is what hope looks like now. How foolishly we put our trust in such fragile things. How we let our lives hang in the balance of something that could snap from the gentlest touch. How dare we even breathe? Where could we go to find that place.. Where every breath is not a prayer?

1. Play the Mp3 named "Day 4".
2. Scene: Kitchen table - about 5 min.
3. Play the sound marking the passage of time
4. Scene: Crisis Centre
 - a. The GM plays the Government crisis coordinator. The interaction will once again be brief.
 - b. The GM reads the following statement:
At 5:15 AM last night, the video connection that we had established with the trapped miners went down. This does not necessarily mean that anything catastrophic has happened. The authorities and NGC Energy are working to

determine what might be the cause, while ceaselessly trying to re-establish contact in any way possible. For now we ask you to be patient and to stay strong... End of statement.

5. Play the sound marking the passage of time
6. Scene: Dinner table - about 5 min.
 - a. During this scene you will prep the NPCs for the conference scene in act 5:
 - i. Tell them to wait with interacting with their families until you “connect the call”.
 - ii. The miners have been trapped for three weeks. They have run out of food and are incoherent and mix reality with fantasy. In short... things are as bad as they can be.
 - iii. When asked about whether they can hear the drilling of the rescue crews, they should either say no or incorporate the sounds into their fantasies, for instance saying “I can hear birds...”. Encourage them to play freely with this.
 - iv. As before, the scene ends with the batteries running out.
7. Play the sound marking the passage of time

Act 5: “Maybe we can find a town where dreams aren’t buried underground...” - Day 21

Tone: Hope. Doubt.

Guided narration:

In my dreams, there is a horse. It stands 18 hands high. It’s black as the sky and it’s got fire in its eyes. And it leads me to the river to taste the sweet water. Then it is gone, flying over the hills and mountains. And I am alone in the dark.... Again....

Dear God. I know that we have not always seen eye to eye, but I have tried to live a good life, and I have never asked you for anything. Please lord... just please. I just can’t breathe anymore. If you hear me Lord, then we will leave this place and find a town where dreams aren’t buried underground.

1. Play the Mp3 named “Day 5”.
2. Scene: Kitchen table - Listening to the morning sermon.
3. Play the sound marking the passage of time in the middle of the sermon and gesture the players to the crisis centre if they are confused.
4. Scene: Crisis Centre
 - a. The GM plays the Government crisis coordinator. The coordinator seems a little shaken. Apologize for bringing them there so early on a sunday, let them know that you believe that you have found them and that a rescue operation is currently underway. Things are looking up.

Then go from professional to more personal and say something along the lines of:

(To themselves) *I really should not be doing this....*

(To the players) It is against protocol, but ... I to have a family, and I would want to know. .. We have been able to re-establish contact and you can talk with your loved ones one more time.

- b. As before 2 people from each family can talk to the trapped miners. The coordinator is noticeably emotional, but tries to remain professional and calm. When the scene ends, bring the players back to the central room of the crisis centre and let them play together for a little while before moving on.
5. Play the sound marking the passage of time
6. Scene: Dinner table - about 5 min.
7. Play the sound marking the passage of time

Act 6: “If I could only see your face again...” - Day 22

Guided narration:

In my dreams I learned that we are but visitors in the world. We live, we work, we pray, and we pass on. During our brief flicker of life, we try to do something good, something useful with our lives. Did I make other people happy? Did I find my true purpose, the true meaning of life? Did I do good? ... I don't know whether the universe, with its countless galaxies, stars and planets, has a deeper meaning. But I know that I miss your face. I miss feeling your hand on mine. I miss hearing your laughter. I could die happy with just one more day, one more hour with you ... I would do just anything.. If I could only see your face again.

1. Play the Mp3 named “Day 6”

THE END

Post-Game:

Debriefing

There are many different debriefing methods that can be applicable to this larp, but we recommend to at least do the following:

- Let the players sit with their families around the kitchen table for a few minutes to let the first reactions out.
- Have the players meet up in the crisis centre. Emphasize that debrief is not mandatory and that we all have different needs after an experience like this.
- Start by thanking the players for playing the scenario and read out the credits.
- Do a short de-roleing exercise. Have the players take off their name tags and start by saying “Hi. I am [your name]. In this larp I played [Name of Character]. Right now I need [whatever you feel like you need. Time. Affirmation. A hug...].” Go around the circle. Thank each player after they have shared.
- If anybody has something that they want to share or talk about, the floor is open.

Characters:

HALL

All members of this family were born and raised in Norton's Gully, and still live there. They always say that the wind and water of the region runs in their bodies like blood. The Halls feel very connected to the community, and mourn its decline. They will protect what they feel is theirs and will usually defend the way of life and previous decisions made.

Their son Mike will become one of the trapped miners.

1. Father (miner, proud, defensive)
2. Mother (has wanted their son to quit, increasingly anti-mine, feels alone in this)
3. Sibling (miner, copies their father but insecure/jealous)
4. Best friend (loyal, should have been there/traded shifts)

MCCORMACK

The McCormacks are a family who feel connected to Norton's Gully as a community, but are slowly disentangling themselves from the mining that is its backbone. They can see the merit of other ways of life, and are not sure if the distant company board truly understands the village or has their best interest at heart.

Their son Keith will become one of the trapped miners.

5. Father (no longer a miner, union minded, angry)
6. Mother (feels very connected to the town and worries, not a fan of the mine)
7. Sibling (conflicted, went off to college)
8. Partner (not from the town, city person)

1- FATHER HALL

*"Daddy wore his purple heart so proudly
Long before I turned into a man
And buried with our flag across his casket
I was still too young to understand."*

- David Allan Coe

Part of the HALL FAMILY together with your wife, your child, (their spouse), and your son's best friend.

FEELINGS ABOUT MIKE (the trapped miner):

You are proud of Mike. You raised him to be a hard worker and someone who just keeps going no matter what. This is how you know he is still alive. If he was with you right now he would ask people to just stay calm and coöperate with authorities, so you feel you need to do so in his name.

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: egregious, dependable, tireless

ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: stubborn, aggressive, overbearing

FUNCTION in the game:

You embody the traditional ways of thinking in the town. You believe in the industry, the way of life, and the Republican party. Anything people might say that shakes that conviction is quickly pushed aside and ignored, or met with contempt. You will defend 'your people' and the decisions they make whatever happens.

BACKGROUND:

You stem from a long line of miners, and you were born and raised in the town. It was never a question that your children would also become miners: it is hard work but honest and connected to the land, and it is the work that your family does. You do not doubt that the company you work for has your best interest at heart. God would not have made them successful if they were bad people.

You have raised a beautiful family, and feel like this family and this town stand for the real America: they all want you to feel bad for being uneducated and traditional, but you have been able to give your family all they need: a house, cars, trips to the parks, Christmas presents: all earned with your own two hands. There is nothing that makes you more proud.

2 - MOTHER HALL

*"Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers
Remember when you're talkin' to the man upstairs
That just because he doesn't answer doesn't mean he don't care
Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers"*

- Garth Brooks

Part of the HALL FAMILY together with your husband, your child, (their spouse) and your son's best friend.

FEELINGS ABOUT MIKE (the trapped miner):

You are completely heartbroken. Mike is your oldest and has always been such a blessing to your family. The very thought of losing him is just impossible. You should have saved him, should have talked to him more until you had convinced him to find a safer job. What kind of mother are you to have failed in this?

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: principled, kind, giving

ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: pessimistic, inflexible, self-blaming

FUNCTION in the game:

You symbolize people who were raised traditionally but are starting to see the downside of the mines. You feel guilt for not being able to convince Mike to quit before it was too late. You are the more moderate voice within your own family, and can to some extent bridge the gap between the two families: you like the mother of the other miner, she is also very connected to the town, and you envy her for being able to publicly denounce the mining company.

BACKGROUND:

Your father is from these parts, but your mother was from the big city. You remember her always enjoying nature, but also strangely longing for things you never knew, like going out into the nightlife at night and shopping malls. Your father was distrustful of city people, insisting that 'those people' only want to use their wealth and education to control folks like you, and your husband is much the same.

The two of you have shared much: a love for this town, for the mountains and for both of your children, who became miners like their father. You have meekly tried to bring up alternative careers, especially to Mike, but they never really showed an interest. Truth is, have you seen too many things going wrong in the past decade, too many people hurt.

3 - SIBLING HALL

*"And I've just got to wonder what my Daddy would've done
If he'd seen the way they turned his dream around
I've got to go by what he told me, try to tell the truth
And stand your ground. Don't let the bastards get you down"*

- Kris Kristofferson

Part of the HALL FAMILY together with your father, your mother, your brother's best friend and (your spouse).

FEELINGS ABOUT MIKE (the trapped miner):

You and your brother did not always get along as children, and you certainly did not always get along as adults. Despite that, you do love him and wish for the best outcome, both for his sake and that of the town. If an incident like this gets too much attention, that may be it for Norton's Gully.

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: determined, practical, outgoing

ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: judgemental, scared, projecting

FUNCTION in the game:

You symbolize the younger generation who may be able to break a cycle and start a new way of life, but of course that is terrifying because this life is all you have ever known. That is why you will defend its sustainability. You look up to your parents and do not want to disappoint your father, and through a strange mixture of lack of understanding and jealousy you will lash out at the 'traitors' in your generation that did not stay true to Norton's Gully.

BACKGROUND:

Your family has strong roots in Norton's Gully, and you are a miner just like your father and brother. You take pride in the hard-working, true American background that it has provided to you and your loved ones. People like you prove that one does not need much to live a fulfilled life: a warm community, a good family and a dependable job are plenty, no matter what the world tries to tell you.

And sometimes when you lay in bed at night you wonder if that entire attitude is truly yours, or actually your father's. Not that you would ever consider changing anything about your life, not truly. The alternative is to work in an office in a city, alienated from land and neighbors. You shake off the thought that you never had a choice: you did, and you chose this.

4 - BEST FRIEND HALL

*"Wish i could look death in the face
Transcend both time and space
and reclaim those bygone days
that i was such a fool to waste"*

- Shovels & Rope

Part of the HALL FAMILY together with Mike's father, his mother, and his sibling and.

FEELINGS ABOUT MIKE (the trapped miner):

Mike has been your best friend for as long as you can remember. You grew up together, you now even live in the Hall household, and your lives are impossibly intertwined: the thought of him not being there just makes no sense. You also feel like it's your fault he is in there now: it should have been you.

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: optimistic, upbeat, sincere
ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: careless, avoidant, a pushover

FUNCTION in the game:

You are another representation of the young generation of miners that has an important choice to make in the coming years: whether this way of life will make it into the future. You will try to be positive and keep everyone's spirits up so you do not have to acknowledge that you are wracked with guilt and powerlessness.

BACKGROUND:

You were born and raised in Norton's Gully. You and your friend Mike have been thick as thieves since your early childhood. You have been helping each other through school, where you did poorly, and after that you signed on for the mining corporation together. This town is all you have ever known, and you can't help romanticizing it a bit, especially when you look at the landscape around you.

The mine has always been hard work, but you are not afraid of that. You will always try to keep morale high by telling jokes and being upbeat, that's just how you are. When the game starts you have just traded shifts with Mike, so you got to go on a date later that day without being all exhausted. The two of you do that often, and just change shifts until you are both happy.

5 - FATHER MCCORMACK

*"When you're born in West Virginia
A miner through and through
Union, God, and country
Was all you ever knew"*

- Steve Earle

Part of the MCCORMACK FAMILY together with your wife, your child, and Keith's partner

FEELINGS ABOUT KEITH (the trapped miner):

You love both your children very much, but have often cursed Keith for not going to college like his sibling, instead insisting on a mining career. The fact he gets trapped makes you feel both vindicated and very frustrated. It makes you more angry with the system.

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: inspiring, stable, open

ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: uncompromising, belligerent, passive-aggressive

FUNCTION in the game:

You are the one that was firmly raised in the Old Ways but changed their mind. You had an accident, had to quit your job and can now see what is wrong and exploitative about the mining company with some much-needed distance. Of course you also see that there is not really any alternative, and that makes you angry.

BACKGROUND:

You were born in this area and worked in the mine for 30 years, always giving it your all. You were working shoulder-to-shoulder with half the town, and that was how it had always been. Eight years ago you had an accident that left you unfit for work, and you went on a medical early retirement. This has been tough on your family, but what you have had no shortage of is time to think. And you feel you can see the mine for what it is now. The company does not do right by those who have always done right by it.

You worked hard to convince one of your children to leave the town and try for that college degree, because you knew it would be better for them in the long run. You would have liked to convince Keith too, but he was stubborn. At least he has an out-of-town partner who may be able to talk some sense into him.

6 - MOTHER MCCORMACK

*"I would rock my soul in the bosom of Abraham
I would hold my life in his saving grace
I would walk all the way from Boulder to Birmingham
If I thought I could see, I could see your face"*

- Emmylou Harris

Part of the MCCORMACK FAMILY together with your husband, your child, (other child), and Keith's partner

FEELINGS ABOUT KEITH (the trapped miner):

You are proud of both your children in very different ways. You are proud of Keith for choosing the town with both hands, and still being open enough to choose a city partner. You fear for what will become of all of you, but especially his lover, if something happens to him.

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: proud, caring, affirmative

ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: pushy, demanding, a worrier

FUNCTION in the game:

You are the school teacher and feel very firmly rooted in this town. You represent the idea that one can deeply love their community without approving of every aspect of it. You want the new generation to have more options in life, but of course it is also clear that the town would simply dwindle away without the coal company, and that makes you increasingly worried.

BACKGROUND:

You came to Norton's Gully when you got married, straight from the house of your parents a few towns over. That was also a mining community. Most places here are. You have always been very happy here and raised two beautiful children. You never liked the idea of hard labour for them and never fully trusted the company, but Keith went to work for them anyway.

You can feel the town crumbling away under your fingertips, and it makes you very sad. Where many people only see a mine or a company, you have always focused on the community. As the teacher it has been very easy to live not by the laws of money or coal but by births and weddings, festivals and setbacks, and the way the people here carry each other whenever it is needed. You wish there was a way to preserve that even without the mine, but that does not really seem possible.

7 - SIBLING MCCORMACK

*"There ain't a lot that you can do in this town
You drive down to the lake and then you turn back around
You go to school and you learn to read and write
So you can walk into the county bank and sign away your life"*

- Steve Earle

Part of the MCCORMACK FAMILY together with your father, your mother, (sibling), and keith's partner

FEELINGS ABOUT KEITH (the trapped miner):

You were very close as children but have started to drift apart over the years. You never blamed Keith for choosing the mine, after all it was the easy option, but you feel like he in turn resents you for your choice, and that makes you uncomfortable. You are not sure whether that's all in your head or not.

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: fun, adventurous, forgiving
ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: indecisive, avoidant, self-centered

FUNCTION in the game:

Together with your brother's partner you represent the city and education. You could have been a miner but chose differently. You now have a college degree and are torn: part of you wants to stay in or near the town that you know so well and be with your family, and part of you sees so many more opportunities out there in the wide world.

BACKGROUND:

You come from a traditional mining family, but after having to quit the mine your father has done everything in his power to convince you and your brother Keith to choose carefully whether that is what you really want. You used to watch television all the time as a child, your mother always had to literally put you outside. You dreamt of cities and beautiful things and office jobs.

You studied accountancy in Richmond. It was not even that large of a city, but despite loving parts of it you also felt alienated and swamped with people. Now that you have a degree you have taken some time off to be with your family, and Norton's Gully immediately felt like home again. Some days you want to apply for an office job at the mine, and then immediately realize that if you do not get out now, you never will.

8 - PARTNER MCCORMACK

*"It's knowing that this can't go on forever
Likely one of us will have to spend some days alone
Maybe we'll get forty years together
But one day I'll be gone
Or one day you'll be gone"*

- Jason Isbell

Part of the MCCORMACK FAMILY together with your father-in-law, mother-in-law, and Keith's sibling(s).

FEELINGS ABOUT KEITH (the trapped miner):

He is your big love. You have turned your whole life upside-down to get to be with him, and have always thought his work was dangerous, only to have him tell you not to overreact. He also feels like your lifeline to this town that is not your own.

ON YOUR BEST DAYS you are: creative, flexible, charming
ON YOUR WORST DAYS you are: unrealistic, regretful, messy

FUNCTION in the game:

You symbolize the outside world and the options that world holds for the future. Many of these are things that the majority of the townsfolk are afraid of: big city lifestyles, intellectualism, liberalism. You are an outsider yet share in their greatest tragedy, and have no allegiance to the mining company or the land. Some people will see what you represent as a cause for what happened, others as a solution or alternative.

BACKGROUND:

You come from an upper-middle-class family in Washington and had a great, loving childhood full of culture and opportunities. You met Keith three years ago at a festival and fell head over heels. You work remotely as a web developer, so have decided to move to Norton's Gully specifically to be with him. After all, he can hardly do the same, as a miner.

You go between romanticizing your story (big city intellectual meets rugged miner) and worrying about how dangerous his job is. You get along well with your in-laws, though not necessarily with others in the town. You feel like you try to connect with them, but they are not letting you come closer, and it makes you feel like an alien despite having lived here for several years. Despite loving the landscape you deeply miss the liveliness and culture of the city.

Credits:

If I could see your face again

- A Kairosis larp

Written by **Kjell Hedgard Hugaas** and **Karijn van der Heij**

Audio:

Joshua Goldberg as *News Anchor Stevie Rutt*

Remy van Brussel as *Reporter Colin Johnson*

Kjell Hedgard Hugaas as *The Pastor*

The KCWA jingle voiced by **Kjell Hedgard Hugaas**

Music:

If I Could See Your Face Again by Steve Earle; performed by Steve Earle & the Dukes feat. Eleanor Whitmore; Courtesy of New West Records.

Soundscape:

"Wall of Sound" - Courtesy of Fox News Network, LLC.

Sound effects - Creative Commons on Freesound(.)org

Sound Editing:

Marius van Herpen & Kjell Hedgard Hugaas

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